

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 were examined and reported in the Office Action. Claims 1-4 and 6 are rejected. Claims 1-6 are canceled. Claim 7 is allowed. New claims 8 and 9 are added. Claims 7-9 remain.

Applicant requests reconsideration of the application in view of the following remarks.

I. 35 U.S.C. §102

A. It is asserted in the Office Action that claims 1-3 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,635,288 issued to Stadius ("Stadius"). Applicant has canceled claims 1-3 and 6. Therefore, the aforementioned rejection is moot.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejection for claims 1-3 and 6 is respectfully requested.

B. It is asserted in the Office Action that claims 1-2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 5,896,459 issued to Williams, Jr. ("Williams"). Applicant has canceled claims 1-2 and 4. Therefore, the aforementioned rejection is moot.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102(e) rejection for claims 1-2 and 4 is respectfully requested.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that the Examiner asserted in the Office Action that claim 7 is allowed. Applicant has added new claims 8-9 which depend on allowed claim 7. Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts claims 7-9 are allowable for the above stated reasons.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 7-9 patentably define the subject invention over the cited references of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would be useful in moving the case forward, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR, & ZAFMAN LLP

By: 
Steven Laut, Reg. No. 47,736

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on August 3, 2004.


Jean Svoboda